

# WAYFINDER

## Presenter Pack



Dancenorth acknowledges the Traditional Custodians  
of the land upon which we make our work, the  
Wulgurukaba of Gurambilbarra and Yunbenun, and the  
Bindal of Thul Garrie Waja.

The Wulgurukaba and Bindal people continue to  
nurture a deep and respectful relationship to land and  
sea and it is our great privilege and honour to create on  
their incredible country.

We respectfully acknowledge neighbouring groups of  
our region – the Gugu Badhun and Nywaigi. We pay  
our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
cultures; and their Elders past and present.

We acknowledge the fact that sovereignty was never  
ceded and that Aboriginal people are Australia's first  
dancers.

A major champion of the arts in North Queensland, Dancenorth Australia balances a dynamic regional presence with a commitment to creating compelling contemporary dance that tours the world.

"DANCENORTH IS FAST  
BECOMING THE MOST  
IMPORTANT CONTEMPORARY  
DANCE COMPANY IN  
AUSTRALIA. "

Wesley Enoch AM

Deeply committed to the creation of adventurous, thoughtfully conceived, and highly acclaimed new work; Dancenorth has presented work in more than 55 International Arts Festivals and venues around Australia and the world. Dancenorth has been recognised for its outstanding work with accolades including the prestigious Sidney Myer Performing Arts Group Award, two Australian Dance Awards, two Greenroom Awards, two Helpmann Awards, a PAC Australia Impact Award, and four Major Festivals Initiative (MFI) commissions.

Dancenorth has become an epicentre of cultural change by empowering, supporting and welcoming many artistic voices to its creative hub including a diverse range of choreographers, guest collaborators, Artists in residence and dancers.

Alongside the professional Ensemble and touring productions sits an equally vital pillar of focus: Community Experience. Dancenorth's dedicated team works with diverse and minority communities across Queensland using dance to support, enhance, inspire and heal - bringing communities together.

Led by Co-Artistic Directors Kyle Page (2017 Sidney Myer Creative Fellow) and Amber Haines, and Executive Director Hillary Coyne, Dancenorth is an integral part of the Australian dance ecology making a significant contribution to the dance sector and building literacy around contemporary dance nationally.





# About Wayfinder

Physical exuberance, sonic resonance, and collective exhilaration explode onto stage in a kaleidoscopic fusion of dance, music, and visual art.

Speaking to our sensorial nature, *Wayfinder* reminds us of a state of being that transcends the words that have come to define us. Navigating bigger and more ancient reference points, *Wayfinder* recognises connection as the central axis of the universe.

By the stars, the waves, and the sun, we find our way.

## GENRE

Contemporary Dance

## DURATION

55 minutes

## CLASSIFICATION

Suitable for all ages

## WARNINGS

Contains strobe lighting, theatrical haze, loud / startling noise, and interactive objects that emit light and sound.

## PROGRAMMING INPUTS

Immersive  
Contemporary Australia  
Multi-artform  
Joy-inducing

## CREDITS

Concept, Direction and Choreography:  
Amber Haines and Kyle Page

Lighting Design: Niklas Pajanti

Composition: Hiatus Kaiyote

Sound Art and Design: Byron J. Scullin

Sound Sculpture Design, Construction, and  
Implementation: Robert Larsen and Nicholas  
Roux

Visual Design: Hiromi Tango

Design Associate: Chloe Greaves

Design Assistant: Jeanette Hutchinson

Polyrhythm Consultant: Naomi Jean

Original Performers/Choreographers:  
Marlo Benjamin, Sabine Crompton-Ward,  
Nelson Earl, Tiana Lung, Damian Meredith, Felix  
Sampson, Michael Smith

Performers/Choreographers:  
Sabine Crompton-Ward, Tiana Lung, Aleeya  
McFadyen-Rew, Damian Meredith, Darci  
O'Rourke, Jag Popham, Felix Sampson, Michael  
Smith

# Performance History

## Local Premiere

North Australian Festival of Arts | June 2022  
Townsville Civic Theatre, Queensland, AU

## World Premiere

Brisbane Festival | September 2022  
Brisbane Powerhouse, Queensland, AU

## International Presentation

Cultural Presentations Section, Leisure and  
Cultural Services Department | September 2023  
Tsuen Wan Town Hall, Hong Kong, China, CN

## National Tour

Sydney Festival | January 2024  
The Pavillion, New South Wales, AU

Perth Festival | January 2024  
Queens Park Theatre, Western Australia, AU

Perth Festival | February 2024  
Red Earth Arts Precinct, Western Australia, AU

Perth Festival | February 2024  
Albany Entertainment Centre, Western Australia,  
AU

Perth Festival | February 2024  
Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre,  
Western Australia, AU

Albury Entertainment Centre | February 2024  
Albury, New South Wales, AU

Mona Foma | February 2024  
Theatre Royal, Hobart, TAS

Perth Festival | February 2024  
Heath Ledger Theatre, Western Australia, AU

Bendigo Venues and Events | March 2024  
Ulumbarra Theatre, Victoria, AU

Adelaide Festival | March 2023  
The Space Theatre, South Australia, AU

Home of the Arts (HOTA) | July 2024  
Surfers Paradise, Queensland, AU

Araluen Arts Centre | August 2024  
Alice Springs, Northern Territory, AU

Darwin Festival | August 2024  
Darwin Entertainment Centre, Northern  
Territory, AU

Cairns Festival | August 2024  
Cairns Performing Arts Centre, Queensland, AU

New Annual Festival | September 2024  
Newcastle Civic Theatre, New South Wales, AU

Bathurst Memorial Entertainment Centre |  
October 2024  
Bathurst, New South Wales, AU

The Art House Wyong | October 2024  
Wyong, New South Wales, AU

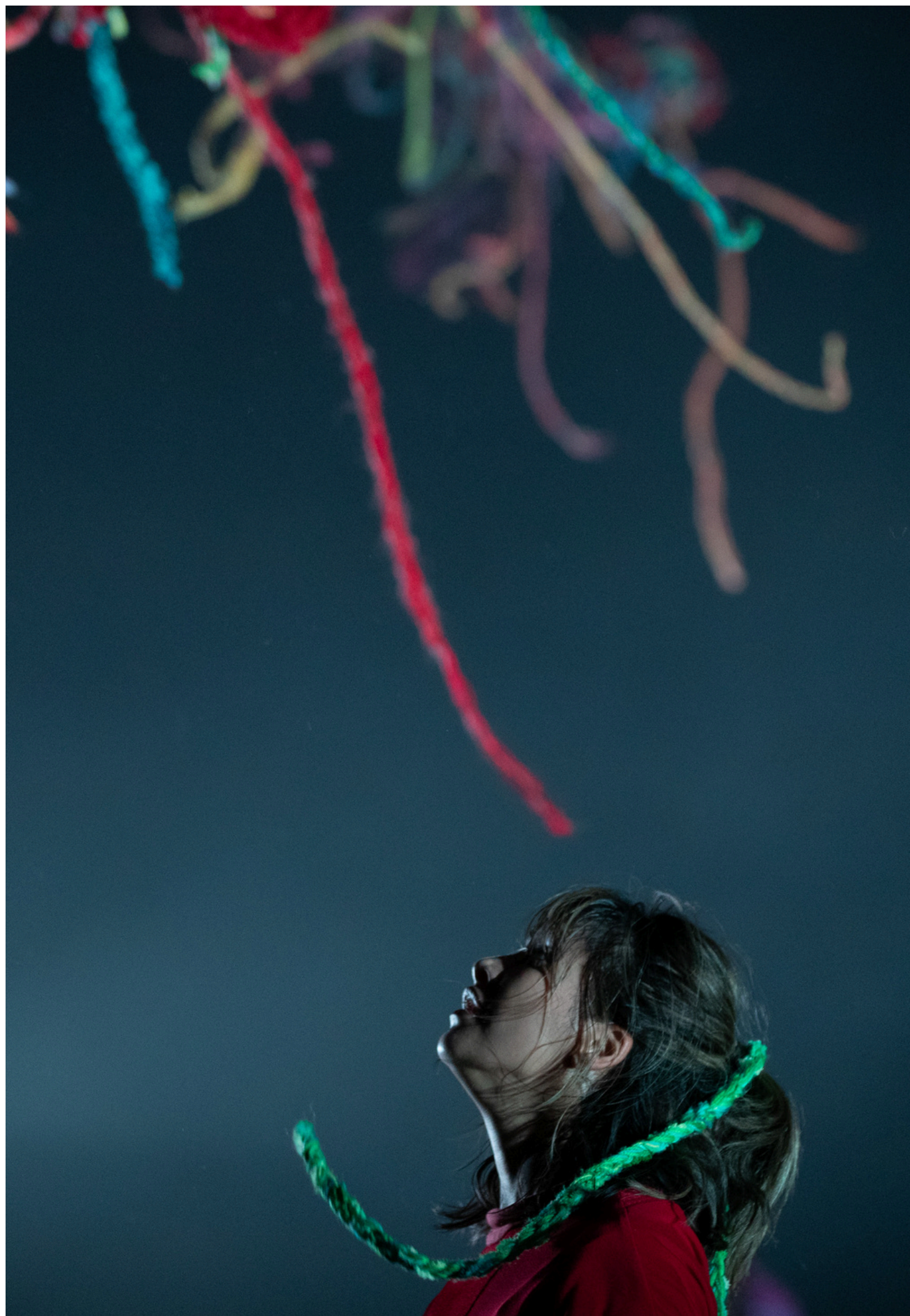
Monash University | October 2024  
Alexander Theatre, Victoria, AU

Geelong Arts Centre | October 2024  
The Story House, Victoria, AU

## International Presentation

Festival Internacional Santa Lucia | October  
2024  
Teatro de la Ciudad (Great Hall of the City  
Theatre), Monterrey, Mexico, MEX

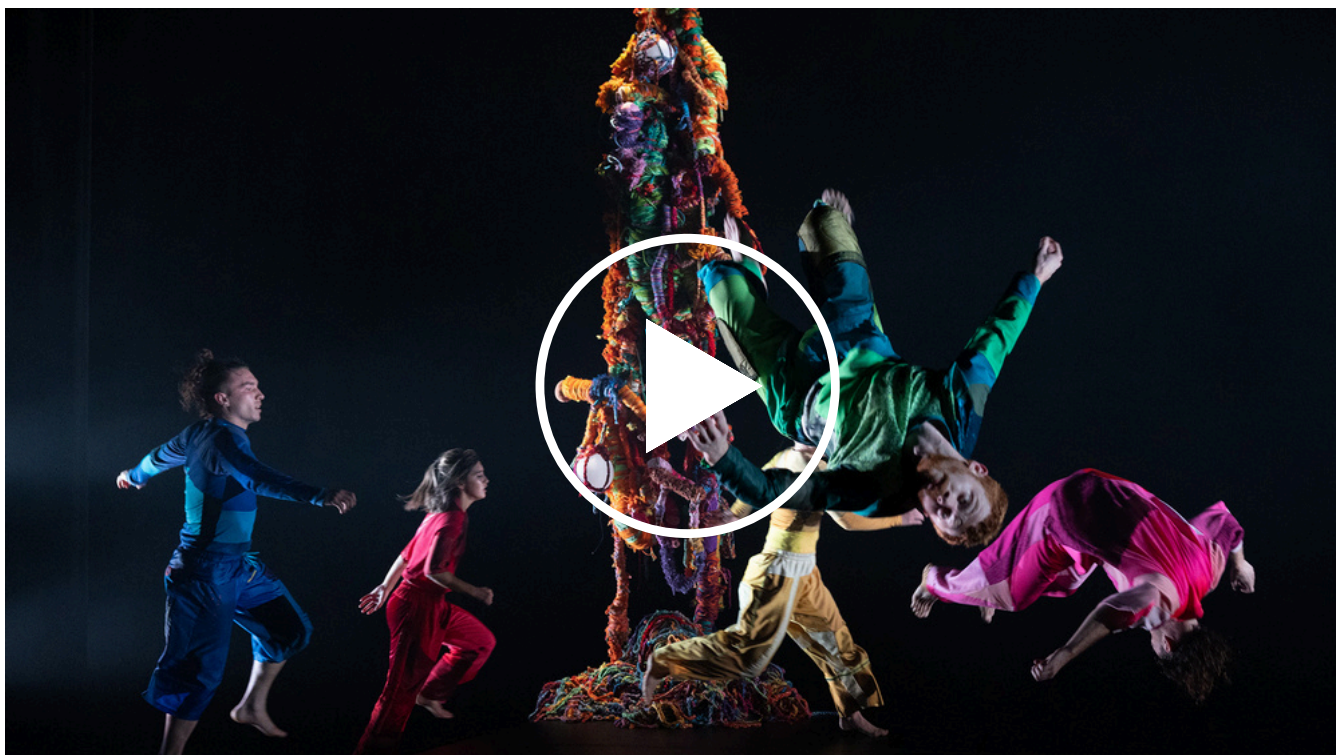






# Video

## HIGHLIGHTS

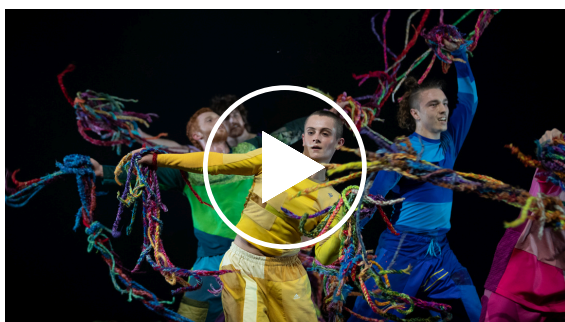


4 mins, Brisbane Festival (2022)

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## FULL LENGTH PERFORMANCE

Araluen Arts Centre (2024)



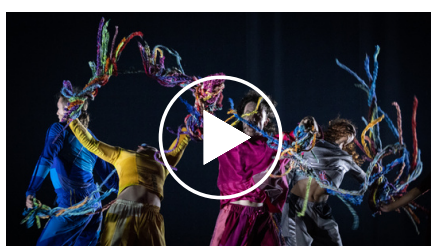
Edited, 56min



Locked-off wide, 55min

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## SIZZLE REELS









# Marketing

STRAPLINE

## An exhilarating explosion of heart

### COPY

Wayfinder is a gathering of heart.

Physical exuberance, sonic resonance, and collective exhilaration explode onto stage in a kaleidoscopic fusion of dance, music, and visual art.

Directed by Amber Haines and Kyle Page, Dancenorth Australia joins forces with three-time Grammy nominated Australian band Hiatus Kaiyote and sound artist Byron J. Scullin to create a soaring composition evoking pleasure and possibility. An undulating sound sculpture condenses and expands this scintillating score, immersing audiences in a new sonic dimension. Japanese-Australian visual artist Hiromi Tango offers her joyful, heart expanding artwork to both the stage design and costumes for this sublime new performance, featuring lighting design by Niklas Pajanti.

Speaking to our sensorial nature, Wayfinder reminds us of a state of being that transcends the words that have come to define us. Navigating bigger and more ancient reference points, Wayfinder recognises connection as the central axis of the universe. By the stars, the waves, and the sun, we find our way.

A summoning of collective awe and wonder, Wayfinder is a tonic for the times.

### MARKETING MATERIALS

We will provide access to our growing collection of marketing collateral:

- Sizzle reels (6 x 20 sec unbranded videos with space for your logos and call to action)
- Exceptional print-quality Promotional, Production, Publicity, and Rehearsal photography
- Social media content including digital advertising content and pull-quotes

### PUBLICITY

Creatives and performers will be available for publicity interviews on request.

### EDUCATION PACK

A comprehensive Education Pack includes thoughts and activities to explore pre- and post- performance.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Wayfinder was commissioned by Brisbane Festival and North Australian Festival of Arts (NAFA). This project was made possible by Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund – an Australian Government Initiative. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body. Dancenorth Australia is assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body, and the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland. Dancenorth Australia is supported by Townsville City Council, and gratefully acknowledges the Wayfinder Giving Circle, who has supported the making of this work.



# Reviews



## THE AGE Andrew Fuhrmann

Wayfinder is a glorious, chromatic frenzy of dance and acrobatic movement, created by Kyle Page and Amber Haines, the artistic and associate artistic directors of Townsville's Dancenorth. It's a jubilant mess of a show and impossible to resist.

In beautifully gaudy costumes, the ensemble of seven streams through the space like prismatically dispersed sunshine. On a foam stage that gives them extra bounce, they tumble and flip and pop in a riot of waving limbs and big Townsville smiles.

Wayfinder offers a uniquely kinaesthetic experience. You can feel the performance in your own body. The feeling of bouncing, cartwheeling and tumbling on grass is stirred irresistibly in the muscles – no matter how distant the recalled memory.

Central to the experience is a pile of multi-coloured ropes that drop impressively from the ceiling at the beginning of the show. These create a sense of disorder that is the perfect setting for the exuberance of the performances.

The dancers wrap each other in these ropes, they bury themselves in them, connect with them and strew them across the stage.

The soundtrack is a collaboration between Bryon J Scullin and the progressive Melbourne-based art-funk quartet Hiatus Kaiyote. The music, with its big beats, vocal acrobatics and constantly changing rhythms, suggests a week-long party compressed into an hour.

The stage design, by artist Hiromi Tango, includes a towering technicolour sculpture that appears during a rare quiet moment. This marvellous swamp-gothic column provides a visual constant, holding the scene together as the party becomes a carnival in its final act.

There's also a novel sound and light sculpture created by Robert Larsen and Nicholas Roux, which is distributed throughout the theatre. This is composed of glowing globes about the size of honeydew melons with individually programmed audio.

Are there too many gimmicks? The multi-coloured fabric, the trampoline floor, the strobe lighting effects, the glowing balls that sing at you and everything else? Is it all too much? Perhaps, but that's the joy of Wayfinder. It revels in its excess.

Unfortunately, the Melbourne season at the Alexander Theatre was two nights only, which is not enough for such a crowd-pleaser of a show.

Later this month, the company will take Wayfinder to Mexico City for the Festival Internacional Santa Lucia.

Before then, however, this Friday and Saturday, Dancenorth will be lighting up the Geelong Arts Centre. Go and see them if you can. Go and chase this remarkable burst of happiness in rainbows all the way to Geelong. You won't be sorry.

# Reviews

" POSITIVELY  
TRANSCENDENTAL "

" THE HIT OF THE  
FESTIVAL "

" A CELEBRATION OF  
HEART, BODY, CONNECTION  
AND COMMUNITY "

THE COURIER MAIL  
Phil Brown

## [EXTRACT]

Thinking about what was the best show at last year's Brisbane Festival I would have to say it was Townsville-based contemporary dance company Dancenorth's RED. Dancers disrobing in a giant deflating bubble ... what's not to love about that?

But could they do it again this year while keeping theirs clothes on? The company is on a roll, like the North Queensland Cowboys. What's going on in Townsville? Must be something in the water.

The answer is a resounding YES and everyone coming out of Wednesday's opening night at Brisbane Powerhouse reckoned they had just seen the hit of the festival. Mind you it was unclear what we had just seen.

All I know is that from the moment the lights hit the stage in the Powerhouse Theatre Dancenorth's new show Wayfinder kicked into high gear and stayed there. All seven of the Townsville-based company's dancers were on stage in this work created by that dynamic duo of Kyle Page and Amber Haines.

It's a colourful show and put that down to the collaboration with artist Hiromi Tango who designed it and created a kind of moving wool installation that the dancers get caught up in, literally. Oh what a tangled web they weave, and an intriguing one, as they ravel and unravel 65 km of wool and dance with such energy and joy that there is not one dull moment in the whole show. Mind you there are some meditative moments too when the dancers become like bodhisattvas at one stage.

Transcendental. It's a word from the 1960s but it suits this incredible production which has the most amazing soundscape by Byron J. Scullin who collaborated with Melbourne band Hiatus Kaiyote to create music and sound that goes from mellow to full funk at times. The lighting design by Niklas Pajanti is way cool too.

[→ READ THE FULL REVIEW](#)







# Reviews

## GUARDIAN AUSTRALIA

Olivia Stewart

"THRILLINGLY INSPIRED"

"A MASTERCLASS ON THE  
IMPERATIVE OF CONNECTING WITH  
AN AUDIENCE"

"GRAVITY-DEFYING DANCE"

"MESMERISING"

[EXTRACT]

Set on a custom-made inflatable stage, the heart of the production is two symbolic centrepieces historically associated with hope: the beacon and the rainbow. The work's title explains the first – represented in the form of 100 coconut-sized “pearls” used onstage and throughout the auditorium – while the latter serves as a recurrent motif, devised in collaboration with visual artist Hiromi Tango.

Taken together, alongside movement, music, costumes, set and lighting, the aesthetic is one of wonder, awe and joy, with a playful energy that's so infectious new dance-goers will be swept up too.

Wayfinder's immersive pearls and rainbows evoke both nature and novelty, offering a surprising interactive treat. They generate community among the seated strangers watching who share spontaneous exchanges, and also among the 150 volunteer finger-knitters, who pulled together 70km of salvaged wool creations for the show.

The sound design is another inspired collaboration, between Bryon J Scullin, Grammy-nominated Australian four-piece band Hiatus Kaiyote and its Melbourne-based lead singer, Nai Palm. It interweaves six tracks (Atari, Prince Minikid, Shaolin Monk, Motherfunk, Rose Water, Canopic Jar and Get Sun are interwoven) alongside Nai Palm's siren song of bespoke ethereal vocalisations.

Often contemporary dance is set to mechanical sounds that can be alienating; this soundtrack is a welcome change. The languid vibe, warm melodies and hip grooves are entrancing, contrasting with energised percussive sections mirrored in hyperkinetic dance moves. Natural organic sounds inspire simple yet redolent imagery that fires the imagination: the dancers lying in a collapsed domino formation use their arms to conjure bird wings, multi-limbed insects and weightless sea creatures.

It's rewarding to see a collaboration among such diverse talents achieve such unity of purpose. Wayfinder is a rare offering that excites, entertains and enriches.

[→ READ THE FULL REVIEW](#)

## NOTHING EVER HAPPENS IN BRISBANE

Writeousness

"THREE CURTAIN CALLS."  
"A STANDING OVATION."  
"THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE."

"SPELLBINDING PERFORMANCE"

"THE SUCCESS OF WAYFINDER WAS  
UNDOUBTEDLY SEALED AND MY  
COLLECTIVE SENSES WERE  
APPEASED."

"UNDER THE CHOREOGRAPHIC  
GUIDANCE OF AMBER HAINES AND  
KYLE PAGE, THE VERSATILITY AND  
IMPROVISATION OF THE DANCERS  
NEVER FAILED TO IMPRESS."

[→ READ THE FULL REVIEW](#)

## BRISBANE STAGE

Helen Gramotnev

"EXPLOSIVE"

"THE SEVEN DANCERS BECOME ONE  
ON THE STAGE, THEIR PHYSICAL  
SKILLS AND UNITY SUPERB!"

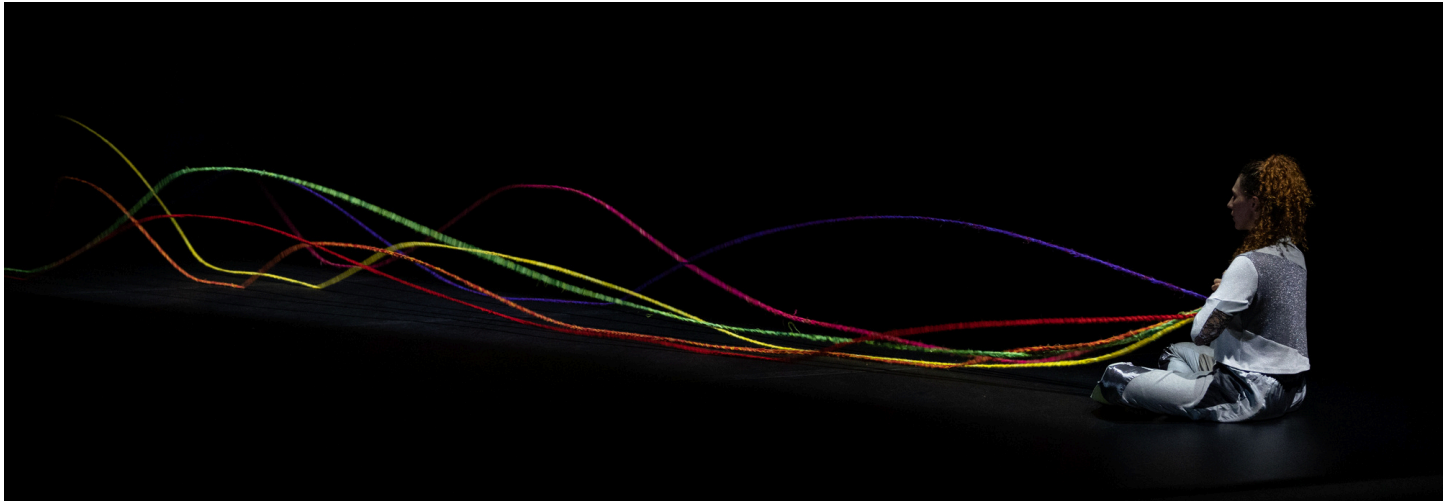
"THE DANCERS DEFY THE LAWS OF  
PHYSICS"

"THIS SHOW HAS THE POWER TO  
MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE A CHILD  
AGAIN"

[→ READ THE FULL REVIEW](#)



# Reviews



CANBERRA CRITICS CIRCLE  
Peter Wilkins

"A TRIBAL CELEBRATION OF CLAN  
PULSATING WITH FREE ABANDON"

"CONTAGIOUSLY EXUBERANT"

"INFECTIOUS IN ITS ENERGY AND  
VIBRANT IN ITS IMAGERY"

[EXTRACT]

Dancenorth Australia explodes with colour and movement in an opening sequence that bursts with the energy of youth. The young company of dancers erupt in a tribal celebration of clan pulsating with free abandon. It is the street dance of the young generation thrusting and pulsating with the defiance and individuality of their tribe. It is also the rite of passage of the new generation, seeking out the light, and discovering their way through life and stamping their identity through the vitality of their dance.

Wayfinder is at times contagiously exuberant and at other times, pensive and questioning. Confidence and doubt create a thread through the work. At times choreographers Amber Haines and Kyle Page weave patterns of a close and reliant community and at other times during the journey in solo work and floor work expose the fear and uncertainty of the doubtful mind. The performance is backed by jazz/punk band Hiatus Kaiyote and their song Get Sun is an expression of the doubting heart. This is the world of angst and confusion. In a performance striving for answers, the dancers move through moments of self-expression, reliance on the group and finally a celebration of arrival at acceptance.

[→ READ THE FULL REVIEW](#)

SYDNEY ARTS GUIDE  
Geoffrey Sykes ★★★★★

"RECONTEXTUALISES  
CONTEMPORARY DANCE"

"WHAT A GENEROUS GIFT TO ITS  
AUDIENCES"

"WE ARE TAKEN OUT OF  
OURSELVES IN IMAGINED STATES  
ACTUALLY OCCURRING ON STAGE."

[EXTRACT]

Dancenorth's WAYFINDER recontextualises contemporary dance. It presents a visceral argument and affirmation for the human condition, both generally and in the apparently current strife torn times. Born in the constraints of Covid, the choreographic couple Amber Haines and Kyle Page, with designer Hiromi Tango, lighting by Niklas Pajanti, and arresting compositions by Hiatus Kaiyote, barely dwell on the negatives instead reaching out for connection with nature that will transcend historical or personal frailty. In doing so they remap the dominant commitment of contemporary or modern dance to abstraction, as it liberated the human body from narrative constraints of classical dance or dance in music theatre. Suddenly colour is back. Along with happiness, connection, joy. Dance is to be enjoyed, in a profoundly produced form only possible by the rigour, insights and sheer hard work of regional Townsville based Dancenorth and its superb performing team.

The result is not romanticism, not a celebration of nature out there. It is the embodiment of natural form, a rich tapestry of images, movements and effects. What a generous gift to its audiences.

[→ READ THE FULL REVIEW](#)







# Production

This summary is indicative and subject to change. A detailed Technical Specification is available by request.

## CREW REQUIREMENTS

### Bump In Crew:

2 x LX, 2 x SND, 2 x MX, 1 x WRD

### Running Crew:

1 x LX, 1 x SND, 1 x MX, 1 x WRD

### Bump Out Crew:

To be confirmed with venue.

## EXAMPLE SCHEDULE - STAND ALONE SEASON

Day 1: Bump In

Day 2: Tech and Dress Rehearsal

Day 3: Opening Night / Performance 1

Day 4: Performance 2

Day 5: Performance 3, Bump Out

## EXAMPLE SCHEDULE -MULTI-CITY TOUR

Day 1: Bump In, Tech and Dress Rehearsal

Day 2: Opening Night / Performance 1

Day 3: Performance 2

Day 4: Performance 3

Day 5: Performance 4, Bump Out

## PEARLS

100 light and sound emitting pearls are pre-set throughout the auditorium. Held by audience members, each pearl contains a speaker which acts as a cipher for an individual human voice, creating an intimate sonic experience. When acting together, they also function as an aural body that condenses and expands across the auditorium. The pearls also create an immersive lighting installation. FOH and crew may need to assist with distribution and collection pre- and post-performance.

## STAGING

Designed for a proscenium or black box venue, the work takes place on a 8m x 8m inflatable floor centrally positioned on a 12m x 12m black tarkett surface. The work contains a second 5m x 2m printed inflatable set piece, a flown set piece and a manually operated drop.

## LIGHTING

The lighting design creates crisp and clear performance zones using a specific rig outlined in the Technical Specifications (profiles, strobes, and moving specials).

## AUDIO

In addition to the Pearls, show content is playback only using an on-stage sound system, with a delay to the FOH system.

## WARDROBE

Costume requirements include steaming pre-show and laundering post-show. Repairs experience appreciated.

## REHEARSAL & WARM UP

A separate warm-up space is required for the dancers – this space should be a minimum of 8m x 8m and ideally have a sprung tarkett floor. A small PA with jack input is required. Access to showers, basic kitchen facilities and a fridge is required.

## FREIGHT

The show can be air, road or sea freighted dependent on the presenting location.





# Community Experiences

Designed to bring our community closer to the conceptual and creative work of the company, Dancenorth facilitates arts experiences that encourage individual expression and community spirit, for all people. Dancenorth meets people where they are, connects them in a space of belonging, and invites them to connect with dance as simply, or seriously, as they desire.

## A SOMATIC SOCIAL EXPERIENCE FOR COMMUNITIES

### Knitting Sittings

Finger-knitting is a simple somatic and creative practice, and these sessions will suit anyone with an interest in visual arts, performing arts, props and set design, textile crafts, and quiet and conscious ways of connecting with people through arts and crafts. Simple instructions, good chats, cups of tea and light refreshments are supplied at each workshop. Dancenorth warmly welcomes people of all abilities and ages.

Duration = 1 - 1.5 hours

Max # Participants = 20

Max # per day = 1

## A DANCE WORKSHOP FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS

### Rhythm and Resonance

Students will embark on fun and engaging tasks learning clever patterns and systems that give brain twisting parameters to guide the creation of rhythm hitting dance. The students are also invited to engage with colourful finger knitting strands created by local community that feature in Wayfinder. These kinetic extensions of movement allow for wild and unruly tactile feedback. Led by Dancenorth's spectacular Wayfinder cast, this exuberant workshop is a sure fire way to engage young hearts, minds and bodies.

Duration = 1 hour

Max # Participants = 25

Max # per day = 4 pending schedule and if travel is required.

## A MASTERCLASS FOR DANCE ARTISTS

### The Body as Nature

An intimate workshop for independent dancers offering a rare chance to experience choreographic methodologies from Wayfinder. Beginning with priming mechanisms that ignite our sensorial awareness and expand our capacity for connectivity, together we will explore a complex improvised structure from Wayfinder that is bound by rigorous parameters and decision making involving kinaesthetic, aural, energetic and intuitive intelligences.

Duration = 1.5 hours

Max # Participants = 20

Max # per day = 1

## A DEEPER DIVE FOR AUDIENCES

### Q&A with the Artists

Whether informal meet and greets or a moderated panel discussion, a post-show Q&A is an excellent tool to deepen connections with the work and its themes, facilitate shared reflection, and provide insights into the creative process.

## OUR COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

### Community Access Tickets

Through our Community Access Ticket Program, we offer at least 10 tickets to each performance free of charge, removing price as a barrier for our local audiences. We encourage you to do the same. Together we can create space for inclusive and diverse audience participation.



## INFORMATION

More information and assets are available upon request:

- Detailed Technical Specifications
- Performance, Publicity, Editorial and Rehearsal Images
- Creative Personnel - Biographies and Headshots
- Program Credits/Logos

## CONTACT

Hillary Coyne  
Executive Director & Co-CEO  
[hillary@dancenorth.com.au](mailto:hillary@dancenorth.com.au)  
T: +61 7 4772 2549

## REPRESENTATION FOR USA:

Cathy Pruzan  
North American Agent  
[cpruzan@aol.com](mailto:cpruzan@aol.com)  
T: (415) 789 - 5051

IMAGES BY AMBER HAINES (PP 1 - 8)  
AND DAVID KELLY (PP 9 - 18).

